



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
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UNIT 29351  
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AEAGX-S

30 May 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army in Europe Command Policy Letter 3, Safety

1. This letter supersedes Army in Europe Command Policy Letter 3, 18 April 2006.
2. References:
  - a. AR 15-6, Procedures for Investigating Officers and Boards of Officers.
  - b. AR 27-20, Claims.
  - c. AR 385-10, The Army Safety Program.
  - d. AR 385-40, Accident Reporting and Records.
  - e. AR 385-95, Army Aviation Accident Prevention.
  - f. FM 5-19, Composite Risk Management.
  - g. AE Regulation 385-40, Accident Reporting and Records.
  - h. AE Pamphlet 385-15, Leader's Operational Accident-Prevention Guide.
3. I am responsible for the safety of all USAREUR personnel and my goal is *No Loss of Life*. This goal applies to aviation and ground safety, both on duty and off duty. We will do everything possible to meet this goal by taking care of our Soldiers, civilian employees, family members, and equipment.
4. Safety is an inherent leadership responsibility and is everyone's business. We must implement appropriate measures at all levels to prevent unsafe acts and conditions that are robbing us of our most precious asset: our people. First-line leaders must be empowered to ensure a safe environment in their units and held accountable for meeting standards. *Don't Walk By* represents our commitment to making on-the-spot corrections. Enclosure 1 provides basic safety tenets, which leaders should use to develop their own safety philosophy.
5. The emphasis on safety begins with me, as the USAREUR Safety Officer, and continues through the chain of command down to the individual Soldiers. For us to make this program work, all leaders at all levels must be engaged in safety by emphasizing the need to make it part of our culture, both on and off duty. The key to success, however, is at the battalion level.

*This letter is available at <https://www.aeaim.hqusareur.army.mil/library/>.*

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Battalion commanders mentor their company commanders, and company commanders, along with their noncommissioned officers (NCOs), mentor their Soldiers. Because of their direct association with troops—

a. Company commanders will be appointed as the company safety officers.

b. Company first sergeants will be appointed as company safety NCOs.

c. Company commanders and company first sergeants may not delegate their duties as safety officers and safety NCOs, but they may (and should) rely on the expertise of trained safety personnel to ensure the full spectrum of safety is emphasized throughout the company.

6. Safety, both air and ground, must be integrated into everything we do. That means doing the right thing, the right way, all the time.

a. We as leaders are responsible for establishing and maintaining a positive safety culture. We are also responsible for ensuring the Soldiers and civilians we lead embrace that culture in everything they do, both on and off duty. In many respects, this is unique to our military culture. We must be concerned about the welfare and combat readiness of our Soldiers, including their physical and mental well-being, training, and personal as well as family readiness. Our philosophy must be overarching but simple: supervise, educate, reduce risk, and seek out and eliminate conditions, practices, and habits that threaten the safety of our people. Success is defined as a fully integrated and functioning composite risk management program. The commander's commitment and engagement are critical to the program's success.

b. Where are we at risk? Our recent history clearly shows that motor vehicles, including privately owned vehicles (POVs) and motorcycles, are our biggest fatality risk. Our biggest lost-time injury risk is on- and off-duty sports, along with vehicle accidents. Our biggest aviation risk is human-error-based collisions with objects (wires, trees, the ground, and so on) and inefficient crew coordination. Use this information with USAREUR and subordinate unit safety-campaign composite risk assessments to make a complete threat assessment. Leaders at all levels must ensure their Soldiers understand and are physically and mentally prepared for the threats they will encounter.

7. AR 385-10 establishes the Army Safety Program. AR 385-95 addresses Army aviation accident prevention. In addition to these regulations, commanders will comply with the following:

**a. Safety Training for Leaders.** Before taking command, officers must complete the online Commander's Safety Course. The senior NCO in the organization must complete the Commander's Safety Course, the Senior NCO Safety Course, or the 40-hour Safety Officer/NCO Course (SOC 40).

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**b. Safety Training for Additional-Duty Safety Personnel.** USAREUR task forces and units (company level and above) must have a safety officer or NCO appointed on orders and working for the commander. Within 30 days after appointment, this individual must complete the Additional Duty Safety Course (<https://safetylms.army.mil>). Within 90 days after appointment, this individual also must attend SOC 40. These are two separate requirements. Additional-duty safety personnel at USAREUR detachments, including rear detachments, must at least attend the Additional Duty Safety Course.

**c. Safety Campaigns.** I will issue semiannual safety campaigns that define and target specific risks and the program structure. Commanders of USAREUR major subordinate commands will establish directives that implement the intent and specific requirements of these campaigns.

**d. Under the Oak Tree Counseling.** We must remain decisively engaged to ensure that young Soldiers foresee and manage the risks associated with off-duty behavior. The method for leaders to interact with their Soldiers is called *Under the Oak Tree Counseling*. Before weekends and holidays, and before Soldiers go on pass or leave, first-line officers and NCOs will give a composite risk briefing, and first-line NCOs or supervisors will meet with each Soldier to discuss the Soldier's off-duty plans. This ensures that leaders are aware of their Soldiers' plans and have made a verbal agreement on the steps to be taken to manage identified risks. On the day the Soldier returns, the leader and the Soldier will meet again to review what happened. During these conversations, leaders should congratulate Soldiers who show that they applied a positive safety-decision process. If a Soldier encountered a difficult situation that was unforeseeable before departing, leaders should discuss how the Soldier reacted and talk about ways to handle similar situations in the future. This is a leader program without paper. The intent of this policy applies equally to Soldiers managed by civilians. Enclosure 2 provides more information.

**e. Unit Safety Certification.** Unit safety certification incorporates fundamental, unit-centric, safety-program elements into a single recognizable program. Commanders must maintain unit safety certification as personnel rotate. They also must maintain the objectives of this program while deployed outside the USAREUR area of responsibility. Enclosure 3 provides information on certification requirements. I encourage commanders participating in multinational exercises or operations to share our safety philosophy, processes, and tools with our allies to improve our overall coalition risk posture.

**f. Safety Alerts.**

**(1) McKiernan Sends Messages.** Whenever significant events occur that affect the Army in Europe, and whenever major risks arise that threaten the safety of our personnel, I will issue a McKiernan Sends safety-alert message. My intent in issuing these messages is to quickly communicate important and useful information to all personnel, top to bottom. McKiernan Sends

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messages will be posted on unit bulletin boards and distributed in every way possible to meet my intent of immediate top-to-bottom notification.

**(2) Army Preliminary Loss Reports (PLRs).** The United States Army Combat Readiness Center (USACRC) issues PLRs on accidental fatalities. Commanders who receive these PLRs will forward them to their subordinates. These PLRs serve two purposes: they provide risk-management information and they ensure that everyone sees and personally relates to the magnitude of the losses taking place across our Army.

**g. CG Safety Council.** The CG Safety Council is a forum of senior leaders from brigade-level units and above, including leaders from IMCOM-Europe and major tenant activities. Meetings are conducted twice a year and attendance is mandatory. These meetings are my personal *Under the Oak Tree* opportunity to communicate directly with commanders and emphasize issues that affect our risk posture. During these meetings, we will take time to closely examine accidents of my choosing in a no-holds-barred, after-action review (AAR) format and participate in professional development led by Government and industry experts.

**h. Knowledge and Assessment Tools.** The USACRC continues to develop communication processes and tools to bridge gaps in knowledge and experience. The USAREUR Safety and Occupational Health Office also sponsors a safety e-mail list server that allows each participant to communicate horizontally and vertically with all safety personnel in the Army in Europe. Safety officers and safety NCOs must register with the Eur-Safety Net List Server. This is a critical tool for meeting local challenges at all levels, sharing ideas and documents, and making informal coordination.

**i. Composite Risk Management Requirements.** AE Pamphlet 385-15 and the AE Pamphlet 385-15-1 through -8 series provide a summary of risk-management information and policy. Commanders and leaders will follow the guidance in these pamphlets. Commanders should also refer to FM 5-19 for Army guidance on overall operations.

8. Safety is a leadership responsibility, but every Soldier has an individual responsibility in ensuring safety. Soldiers must have the courage to step forward and speak up when they observe unsafe actions or conditions. Risk affects every aspect of our daily lives. Through education, awareness, supervision, and responsible composite risk management, we can produce an environment that is safe for our Soldiers and their Families. *Don't Walk By.*

9. Soldiers at all levels will comply with the accident-reporting and investigation process to efficiently target risk areas. For class A through C on-duty accidents, I expect two separate investigations: an independent safety investigation in accordance with AR 385-40 and AE Regulation 385-40 to identify what happened, why, and what we should do to keep it from

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happening again; and a separate, collateral investigation for accountability purposes conducted under the provisions of either AR 27-20 or AR 15-6, as appropriate. I will be given an outbriefing on all fatal on-duty accidents within 30 days after they occur. Within 30 days after a fatal off-duty accident, the unit commander will give a verbal AAR to the first general officer in his or her chain of command. A summary of the AAR results must be sent through the chain of command to me for my review. All relevant lessons learned must be shared through the USAREUR Safety Office.

10. Commanders should reward leaders and Soldiers by using the awards program to showcase and reinforce positive safety behavior. Awards for safe conduct and activities are a powerful motivating tool. You and your unit must have a strong awards program as a cornerstone to your safety program.

11. An effective safety program requires all leaders, down to and including first-line supervisors, to be engaged in safety. Deliberate, composite risk management and taking care of one another are full-time responsibilities that directly enhance unit readiness.



DAVID D. McKIERNAN  
General, USA  
Commanding

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## LEADER SAFETY FUNDAMENTALS

• **ESTABLISH A COMMAND CLIMATE THAT LEVERAGES TEAMWORK, DISCIPLINE, AND OWNERSHIP OF MISSION.** Leaders can establish a command climate that emphasizes the importance of safety by fostering teamwork, discipline, and ownership of the mission. This requires continual education that builds an attitude of safety consciousness in every member of the unit. Facilitate this environment with lateral information and tool-sharing.

• **RECOGNIZE THAT SELF-DISCIPLINE, KNOWING WHAT “RIGHT” LOOKS LIKE, AND LEADERSHIP ARE KEYS TO SUCCESS IN ALL THAT WE DO.** Inherent to leadership authority is the obligation to issue and enforce standards. We can make our Soldiers safer by training them to standard in their individual and collective tasks, ensuring they know what right looks like, and ensuring they have the self-discipline to do what is right. Demand performance to standard and take decisive action when standards are violated.

• **SEEK BALANCE.** Combat is an extraordinarily dangerous activity in which success often involves risk. For this reason, we value leaders who are responsible risk-takers—those who properly balance risk with mission accomplishment. In combat, we constantly assess risk; when the risk is too high, we seek other means of approaching the mission. Leaders must use this philosophy in their training programs. Our goal is to train realistically and safely, and to recognize and assess risk as we do in combat. However, we also must recognize that our risk-acceptance threshold must be readjusted on redeployment to garrison.

• **EXECUTE TRAINING TO STANDARD.** Commanders and command sergeants major are responsible for approving training and executing it to standard. Meet the safety requirements in AE Pamphlet 385-15.

• **INTEGRATE COMPOSITE RISK MANAGEMENT INTO ACTIVITIES.** Leaders at every level will integrate composite risk management into all activities, both on and off duty. High levels of residual risk must be elevated to the battalion or higher level for decision. Extremely high levels of residual risk must be elevated for decision to the first general officer in the chain of command.

• **ENFORCE RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR.** Raise awareness of personal risk and insist that our people develop a sense of responsibility for their own well-being. Discourage risky off-duty behavior that could lead to injury or death. Leaders should know who is at risk in their units, understand the potential effects of rapidly changing environments, and train and educate their subordinates accordingly. Identify and eliminate hazards to Soldiers, civilians, and family members.

• **ESTABLISH EMERGENCY-CONTACT AND “RIDE-HOME” PROGRAMS.** Units must ensure that their Soldiers know whom to call when they are at risk. Ride-home programs should encourage Soldiers who need a ride to request one from their unit, the military police, or personnel involved in voluntary Soldiers Against Drunk Driving programs. Leaders should also consider developing a program to contact their at-risk individuals at the midpoint of a 4-day or longer absence to encourage them, reinforce concerns, and to provide possible ways to overcome any new challenges the individual may face before returning.

## **MEETING UNDER THE OAK TREE**

### **1. General.**

Managing off-duty risk is critical to meeting our goal of *No Loss of Life*. We must remain decisively engaged in ensuring that Soldiers recognize and understand how to manage risky behavior themselves. Before weekends and holidays, and before Soldiers go on pass or leave, first-line officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) will give a composite risk briefing, and first-line NCOs or supervisors will meet with each Soldier to discuss the Soldier's off-duty plans. This process ensures that leaders are aware of their Soldiers' plans and have made a mutual, verbal contract on the steps to be taken to manage identified risks. Leaders also must "close the loop" with their Soldiers after the Soldiers return by reinforcing what went right as well as what, if anything, went wrong and by discussing challenges the Soldiers may have faced. The intent of this policy applies equally to Soldiers managed by civilians. Ultimately, this will lead to self-motivation and a change in the individual's attitude in a way that goes beyond group associations.

### **2. Meeting Under the Oak Tree.**

a. Meeting *Under the Oak Tree* is the road to success. This refined, back-to-basics initiative shows our commitment as leaders and is truly "taking care of Soldiers." The requirement to meet *Under the Oak Tree* complements and must be used with individual risk assessments. This meeting is not intended to involve paperwork, and written records of the meeting are neither necessary nor desired. The meeting is intended to be a face-to-face, leader-to-Soldier meeting during which guidance is given and both parties agree to a personal, behavioral, verbal contract. Meeting *Under the Oak Tree* ensures that the first-line leader or supervisor is able to make a verbal contract with the Soldier in which the Soldier agrees to take steps to mitigate risks identified in the assessment.

b. Soldiers who plan to drive a car or ride a motorcycle on a trip during the period under review and their first-line leaders must pass additional gates.

(1) The Soldier and the first-line leader must have completed the Driver's Risk Awareness Questionnaire ([http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/leader\\_tools.htm](http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/leader_tools.htm)). This is a one-time requirement for each licensed Soldier. Leaders, however, should ensure that a new baseline is established when conditions change. Unit leaders are encouraged to download the Excel spreadsheet program and ensure that it is available for use in the local area.

(2) For each trip they make, Soldiers will complete the online United States Army Combat Readiness Center (USACRC) Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS) at <https://crc.army.mil/includes/tabbeddisplay.html>. Although space is provided on the TRiPS-generated form, the forms are not to be signed. This is part of a verbal agreement between the leader and the Soldier. If access to the USACRC website is not available, Soldiers may use the USAREUR Off-Duty Risk-Assessment Card. This PowerPoint document should be downloaded from the USAREUR Safety website at [http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/leader\\_tools.htm](http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/leader_tools.htm) and made available at the unit for Soldier use.

### **3. Basic Responsibilities.**

a. First-line officers and senior NCOs are responsible for conducting unit composite risk-management briefings.

b. First-line NCOs are responsible for—

- (1) Knowing their Soldiers.
- (2) Reviewing risks associated with their Soldiers' activities.
- (3) Considering the range of composite risk-management factors and asking pointed questions to determine risks.
- (4) Considering the unit risk-reduction profile.
- (5) Providing advice and counsel on risk mitigation.
- (6) Making a *Go* or *No Go* decision on the plan. NCOs will not allow Soldiers to go on pass or leave until they are satisfied that the risks have been identified and sufficiently mitigated and the Soldier and NCO have made a verbal agreement as to how to mitigate the risks.
- (7) Following up with Soldiers the day after they return from pass or leave.

c. Soldiers are responsible for—

- (1) Making required assessments before the meeting.
- (2) Openly discussing plans and associated risks for the period under review.
- (3) Abiding by the verbal contract and following the risk-assessment and risk-management process as conditions affect the contract.
- (4) Providing open feedback on what happened. The Soldiers should explain what went right and what, if anything, went wrong. The Soldiers should also describe any challenges that he or she had to overcome and how they were managed.

d. Soldiers and their NCOs are jointly responsible for—

- (1) Completing their obligations for the one-time Driver's Risk Awareness Questionnaire (applicable to drivers).
- (2) Making a mutual agreement and executing a verbal "safe behavior" contract covering courses of action for the period under review, and any contingency plans.
- (3) Establishing adjusted conditions for future challenges.

e. Battalion leaders are responsible for verifying the integrity of this process and ensuring that subordinate leaders and Soldiers adhere to safety standards.



## UNIT SAFETY CERTIFICATION

Unit safety certification must be maintained as personnel rotate. Certification requirements are as follows:

a. Each brigade, battalion, and company commander must complete the Commander's Safety Course, which the United States Army Combat Readiness Center (USACRC) provides online at <https://safetylms.army.mil>. The senior noncommissioned officer (NCO) at each of these command levels must complete one of the following three courses:

- Commander's Safety Course.
- Senior NCO Safety Course.
- CATC Safety Officer/NCO Course (SOC 40).

b. Company commanders and first sergeants will be appointed as the safety officer and safety NCO for their company. They will also appoint an additional-duty safety officer or NCO to help accomplish the required safety tasks.

c. Each unit (company level and above) must have at least one SOC 40-trained additional-duty safety officer or NCO, or have assigned safety personnel with an aviation safety skill identifier on orders and working in his or her area of responsibility. Within 30 days after appointment, the additional-duty safety officer or NCO must have taken the online Additional Duty Safety Course. This course is at <https://safetylms.army.mil>. Both the online course and SOC 40 are required for safety officers and NCOs who do not have an aviation safety skill identifier.

d. Commanders will ensure that subordinates have ready access to the risk-management tools available on the USACRC and USAREUR Safety websites. Our challenge with lowering the accident rate is related to the depth of knowledge and experience of the leadership closest to the troops. Junior leaders have minimal experience from which to make sound, risk-based decisions. Therefore, leaders must know where to find tools to compensate for "gaps" in experience or knowledge. The USACRC has a wide variety of tools to provide junior leaders "instant expertise." These tools must be combined with mentoring using a "three-deep leadership" method consisting of "contact-level" leadership and backed up with two levels of active leader guidance, mentoring, and assistance.

e. Safety officers and safety NCOs must register for the Eur-Safety Net List Server. Aviation safety officers and NCOs should also register for the USAREUR Aviation Safety Officer List Server. Instructions for registering are available at [http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/list\\_servers.htm](http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/list_servers.htm).

f. Safety officers and safety NCOs must register with and use the USACRC Risk Management Information System (RMIS) and the Accident Reporting Automation System (ARAS). (5th Signal Command, 7th Army Reserve Command, and the United States Army Europe Regional Medical Command, which officially report accidents to their respective parent commands, may follow accident-reporting guidance issued by their headquarters.)

g. Unit publications clerks must maintain a subscription to *KNOWLEDGE*, which is published by USACRC.